

# MINUTES

## Second Quarterly Meeting of the MISSOURI VETERANS COMMISSION

Held, pursuant to notice

Friday, May 10, 2002 — 10:00 AM

Central Office Headquarters — 1719 Southridge Drive  
Jefferson City, MO

### I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance
- B. New Commissioner Emmett Fairfax introduced by Chairman Niewoehner
- C. Roll Call  
In attendance: **Chairman, Carl Niewoehner, Member Bernadette Miller, Member Emmett Fairfax, Member Reginald Bassa and Member Donald Gralike**
- D. Introductions  
Guests and staff present.
  - 1. Guests: **Andy Scott**, National Military Education and Heritage Center; **Col. Jerry Brown**, Wentworth Military Academy Project Heritage; **Jim Whitfield**, Western Area Coordinator, MO Military Funeral Honors Program; **Norman Campbell**-Commander American Legion, Dept. of MO, Chairman MAVO; **Doug Meyer**, Heartland Veterans Health Network, Dept. Veterans Affairs; **Brad Pendleton**, Veterans Service Center Mgr., VA Regional Office; **John Eckhoff**, Veterans Service Manager, St. Louis County Dept. of Human Services, **Col. A.J. Bridging**, University of Missouri, ROTC; **Kevin Murphy**, AFSCME; **Jack Matthews**, President, Missouri Veterans Commission Foundation; **Tim Daniel**, Homeland Security Program
  - 2. Staff: **Sam McVay**, Executive Director; **Ronald Taylor**, Associate Director; **Anne Payne**, Superintendent of Homes; **Jill Talken**, Executive Secretary; **Ralph Durnbaugh**, Director Veterans Benefits Awareness; **Carl Hargus**, Director, Service to Veterans Program; **Jerilyn Cornelious**, Office Manager, Service to Veterans Program; **Hal Dulle**, Assistant to Director
- E. Approval of January 22, 2002 Commission Meeting Minutes. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as recorded.
- F. Chairman Niewoehner presented a plaque of appreciation to Joseph Frank outgoing Vice Chairman, Missouri Veterans Commission.

## **II. NEW BUSINESS:**

Missouri Veterans Commission Foundation - Jack Matthews explained the purpose of the foundation is to assist the Missouri Veterans Commission in carrying out its mission of service to veterans and their dependents, as well as, promoting the morals and welfare of Missouri Veterans Commission staff and is to be a 501(c)(3) Corporation under the Internal Revenue Code.

Jim Whitfield serves as the Foundation Secretary/Treasurer. A copy of the Foundation statement of receipts and disbursements was distributed to all Commission members. The Foundation is planning a golf tournament in September to raise funds for promotion of MVC programs. All donations made payable to the Missouri Veterans Commission Foundation are tax deductible.

Military Honors Program – Jim Whitfield, Western Area Coordinator, MO Military Funeral Honors Program, announced to date over 17,000 National Military Honors Funeral had been performed since the program began July 1, 1999. In March 2002, 700 graveside ceremonies had been conducted. The mission of the MO Military Funeral Honors Program is to honor the veterans while respecting the families. Legislation is before the House and Senate to increase funding for the program.

Department of Veterans Affairs, Heartland Veterans Health Network – Doug Meyer updated the Commission on the 6 new CBOC's that are scheduled for opening in June. The Missouri Veterans Commission will be contacted of the scheduled grand openings. All CBOC's will have tele-medicine capability. Kent Hill has been hired as the new Director for the VA Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri.

St. Louis Regional Office Dept. Veterans Affairs – Brad Pendleton attended for Gary Williams, Director. Mr. Pendleton announced that workload in the St. Louis Regional Office is declining. Previously reported, a 6month backlog on processing claims is improving and the number of appeals is down.

MAVO - Norman Campbell announced the MAVO meeting will be held today at 1:00 p.m. He offered assistance to the Missouri Veterans Commission on behalf of the American Legion and MAVO.

## **III. OLD BUSINESS:**

Management Report: Executive Director Comments: Sam McVay

**Budget** – Current legislation before the House and Senate in conference, recommends Missouri Veterans Commission cut \$27,000 in E&E money from next years core budget. The conference also went with the House position on the cemetery feasibility study by funding the \$150,000, and the conference agreed

with the House to cut the \$2 million in Memorial Grants. Mr. McVay thanked Ron Taylor and Julie Miller for their long hours and hard work during this time.

**State Veterans Homes** – Mr. McVay informed the Commission that all incidents involving residents at Missouri State Veterans Homes are reported to the Federal VA for a full investigation.

Missouri Veterans Homes: Anne Payne, Director of Homes

**Homes Program** – Safety Net Systems are in place at the Homes Program. There are thirty-four (34) quality indicators. Of the thirty-four indicators, there are three (3) categories:

- 1) Administrative- look at census and turnover
- 2) Clinical - care outcome
- 3) Cost – look at support operations

Programs are tracked and monitored and reported to a team of individuals who review and analyze and develop action plans if needed to prevent the situation repeating.

**March Data** – Volunteer support in the Homes total over 1,000 hours per month. Cash donation average over \$4,000 per month per home. Also noted Mexico Home received a large amount of money from an estate recently. They have a received a partial payment on a trust in the amount of \$180,000 that will go into the Assistance League and will be spent on the residents in that facility.

Ms. Payne indicated Cameron Home has 134 beds filled and Warrensburg Home has 127 beds filled to date. Both homes will be increased to 150 beds each by end of June.

May 4 - Mexico State Veterans Home hosted annual "Family Day" open house A chance to show off new Neighborhood Addition, cafeteria solarium, resident furniture and Community Based Outpatient Clinic.

Jim Whitfield was pleased with his visit to the Mexico Veterans Home facility.

Construction Update:

**Construction** – Report Update May 2, 2002, prepared by Tim Norton was handed out. (attachment)

Service to Veterans Program: Carl Hargus, Director, Service to Veterans Program

Mr. Hargus announced to the Commission his retirement effective July 31, 2002.

New facility located in the inner city St. Louis. New staff has been hired for the St. Louis area Service to Veterans Program to replace positions recently vacated.

Mr. Hargus introduced to the Commission Jerilyn Cornelius, Office Manager, Service to Veterans Program. Ms. Cornelius was awarded the Service to Veterans Program Employee of the Year for 2001. Ron Taylor presented Ms. Cornelius with a gift of appreciation and thanked her for her hard work.

Chairman Niweohner thanked Carl Hargus for his service to the Missouri Veterans Commission.

Commissioner Bassa also noted his appreciation of Carl's hard work.

Cemeteries: Ron Taylor, Associate Director

**Cemeteries Program** – Report Update May 10, 2002, prepared by Ron Taylor was handed out. (attachment)

Commissioner Miller asked about the water damage conditions of the Springfield Cemetery. Mr. Taylor indicated that Office of Administration, Design and Construction will be examining the conditions and determine whether the damaged fence can be fixed or needs to be replaced.

Chairman Niewoehner stated he is looking forward to the opening of the Jacksonville Cemetery. He also noted that Missouri has done an outstanding job of providing benefits to Veterans.

**Service Organization Grants Program** – Ron Taylor reported to the Commission the VSO Grants program has awarded \$450,000 to \$500,000 in grants by the end of the year. Missouri Veterans Commission is working this summer with service organizations in joint training sessions. Due to the increase in activity from VBATF, the telephone and claims work are well up. The VBATF will roll out the program July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Memorial Grants: Ron Taylor, Associate Director

**Memorial Grants Program** – Reported on the following (attachments):

- 1.) The Committee recommends the issuance of a second \$400,000 check to the National Education Center and Museum. Commissioner Gralike made a motion to accept the Committee recommendation. Commissioner Bassa seconded the motion. With a voice vote the motion passed unanimously.
- 2.) The Committee recommends a \$20,000 grant for the Chillicothe Veterans Memorial. Commission Gralike made a motion to accept the

Committee recommendation. Commissioner Bassa seconded the motion. The motion passed by a voice vote unanimously.

- 3.) The Committee recommends \$64,699 for the Jefferson Barracks Memorial Project. After much discussion, Ron Taylor advised the Commission if they would like to issue funds for June, July and August of approximately \$20,000, then ask for approval at the next Commission meeting in August for additional amount if needed. He indicated \$64,699 is what is needed to carry staff till January 2003. Jefferson Barracks hopes to receive funding from Federal Government and also is planning to raise money by fundraisers. The amendment to the recommendation is to re-evaluate in August. Commissioner Gralike made a motion to accept the amended recommendation. Commissioner Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed by a voice vote unanimously.

Andy Scott, Executive Director National Military Education and History Museum discussed the hand out information to the Commissioners. He also informed the Commission a six-member recruitment Committee has now been established. Tim Daniel, Homeland Security Program, informed the Commission that Homeland Security Program is participating and partnered with National Education Center and Museum to help solve problems. Colonel A.J. Bridging, representing University of Missouri, ROTC, explained that the National Education Center and Museum is providing a distinct product to people. The Center will provide training courses for state and local program managers, Homeland Defense Programs, School of Journalism. What it can do for the Missouri Veterans Commission is to educate new legislators on veteran issues and the role of patriotism. Colonel Jerry Brown, Wentworth Military Academy Project Heritage, advised of the three major factors for veterans. 1) educate the young and show them how serving its nation is the right way to go; 2) show the people who are paying the bill and the value; 3) thank veterans for their service to our country. Andy Scott stated the National Education Center has great federal support as well.

**VBATF** – Ralph Durnbaugh updated the Commission on the Veterans Benefits Awareness Task Force timeline and goals. The task force is meeting with USA 800 on providing telephone service. John Eckhoff, State Chairman Benefits Supermarkets, updated the Commission on the Veterans Supermarkets. Dates for Supermarkets in the St. Louis area are July 20<sup>th</sup> in Florissant at the Civic Center, City of St. Louis in August, and September 21<sup>st</sup> in Wentzville at the GM local 2250 Union Hall free of charge. Mr. Eckhoff expressed his concerns on the need to re-issue the Task Forces plans with staff met previously on travel around with the Lt. Governor and also the need to design graphics and logo for the brochures. Chairman Niewoehner stated that he and the Lt. Governor are working on raising funding and have compiled a list of potential donors they will be meeting with. Mr. Durnbaugh also noted the Commission's involvement with the MO Senior Rx Health Fairs. St. Louis hosted a Health Fair on April 27<sup>th</sup> and MVC sent two

Veterans Service officers to assist with veteran claims and questions. US Representative Wm. Lacy Clay's office from the 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District has agreed to help in mailing out VA brochures and MVC fliers out to constituents.

**V. ELECTION OF OFFICER:**

**Election of Commission Officer** - Commissioner Miller made a motion to elect Donald Gralike as Vice Chairman of the commission. Commissioner Fairfax seconded the motion. By a voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

**IV. OTHER BUSINESS:**

Hal Dulle, Assistant the Director, Missouri Veterans Commission, updated the Commissioners on the progress on legislation moving through the houses including the VCCITF bill and HB 1398 & HB 1399 pertaining to the Medals Program.

**NEXT MEETING**

Chairman Niewoehner announced the next Commission meeting will be held on Monday, August 12 at 10:00- 12:00 at the Chateau on Lake, Branson, Missouri. The Missouri Veterans Commission is hosting the Annual NASVH Conference from August 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>, 2002. Anne Payne discussed briefly what the conference agenda items will include.

Commissioner Niewoehner indicated any Commissioner planning to attend the conference to notify Jill Talken in order to get reservations made.

The Commission meeting was then closed pursuant to Section 610.021, Subsection (3) RSMo. for personnel matters. With no action taken, the meeting was reopened.

With no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned.

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Samuel E. McVay, Ph.D., Secretary